

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: April 14, 2016

Agenda Item: Toston Fishing Access Site Land Disposal

Division: Fisheries

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Min

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Background: Toston FAS is located along the Missouri River near Toston, Montana on Montana Highway 287 in Broadwater County. Montana Department of Transportation is currently in the process of planning the realignment of the Hwy 287 bridge that crosses the Missouri River at Toston, MT. This realignment will encroach upon the Toston FAS with fill material covering 1 to 2 acres of the FAS. The existing road accessing the FAS will be abandoned, with a new access road being realigned to the south approximately ½ mile.

At the October 2015 Commission meeting, FWP requested and received Commission endorsement to initiate an Environmental Assessment and associated public comment for the disposal of a 1.1-acre portion of the Toston FAS as required for the MDT Montana Highway 287 bridge realignment project. This effort is completed: we present its results and our recommendation today.

Project Overview and Location:

MDT in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration is proposing to completely reconstruct and widen US 287 between the Toston-South project (currently under construction) and the recently completed Townsend-South Passing Lanes project. The existing bridges over the Missouri River and the Montana Rail Link (MRL) railroad tracks will be replaced with two new structures. The work consists of replacing and enlarging an existing bridge over the Missouri River, and modifying the highway alignment on both sides of the river to accommodate the new bridge alignment. The project site is located in Broadwater County, near the town of Toston, MT on US Highway 287. The location of the project begins in Section 10, Township 5 North, Range 2 East and ends in Section 27, Township 5 North, Range 2 East, Broadwater County, Montana.

Public Involvement Process & Results: An Environmental Assessment was completed for the disposal of the 1.1 acres of the Toston FAS property on February 29th, 2016. FWP received one (1) comment regarding the proposed action; the single comment supported the proposal.

Alternatives and Analysis: No further alternatives or analysis were developed beyond the Environmental Assessment.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: Based on the Environmental Assessment and public comment, we recommend that the disposal of the approximate 1.1 acres of the Toston FAS as described in the EA proceed, with an appraisal of the property to be conducted by MDT and FWP being compensated for the fair market value for the purchase of this additional right of way.

Proposed Motion:

I move that the Commission authorize FWP to dispose of that 1.1 acre portion of the Toston FAS required by MDT for the Highway 287 the bridge realignment, as recommended here by FWP.